



Young Drivers

Motor vehicle crashes are the *leading cause of death* of teenagers. Young drivers are twice as likely as adult drivers to be killed in a crash. Many perceive a driver's license as a ticket to freedom and do not realize driving is a privilege, not a right. It comes with a responsibility to keep themselves and others safe.

Five Major Factors Contributing To Young Driver Crashes



The term "young drivers" usually refers to drivers under the age of 21. These drivers represent only 6% of Kentucky's total driving population, yet are involved in 20% of total collisions, 21% of total injury collisions, and 16% of total fatal collisions.

1. Driver Distraction And Inattention:

- Talking to passengers
- Using a cell phone
- Changing the CD/radio
- Eating and drinking
- Daydreaming

These types of activities led to 36,298 collisions, resulting in 12,288 injuries and **128 fatalities**.*

2. Lack Of Driving Experience And Inadequate Driving Skills:

- Misjudgment
- Driving too fast for road conditions
- Not under proper control
- Overcorrecting/Oversteering

These types of activities led to 22,765 collisions, resulting in 11,470 injuries and **346 fatalities**.*

3. Speeding And Aggressive Driving:

- Risk-taking behavior
- Ignoring the posted speed limit
- Following too close
- Weaving in-and-out of traffic

These types of activities led to 6,042 collisions, resulting in 2,386 injuries and **95 fatalities**.*

4. Impaired Driving:

- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Prescription and non-prescription medication
- Fatigue

These types of activities led to 2,464 collisions, resulting in 1,796 injuries and **70 fatalities**.*

5. Low Seatbelt Use:

Seatbelt use is one of the most effective measures to decrease injuries and deaths in a crash; unfortunately, teens are less likely to be buckled up than any other age group. Over 70% of the young drivers killed were not wearing a seatbelt.*

For seatbelt myths and facts, visit <http://highwaysafety.ky.gov/brochures.asp>

Primary Seatbelt Law

Kentucky's primary seatbelt law means all drivers AND passengers must be restrained while in the vehicle. A fine of \$25 will be given for each person that is not restrained.

*Statistics (2004 through 2006)



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Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) Law

This law, enacted in an effort to reduce teenage driving fatalities and injuries, seeks to control high-risk situations new drivers commonly face and motivate new drivers to drive safely. Highlights include parent certification of 60 practice driving hours (10 hours at night), restricted driving from midnight to 6 a.m., an intermediate license phase, and no moving traffic convictions. For more information, including a guide for parents of teen drivers, a permit practice exam, and GDL eligibility requirements, visit <http://gdl.kytc.ky.gov>.

Distracted Driving


For teenage drivers, the risk of a crash increases with each passenger. Conversations with friends and family cause drivers to take attention off the road. Cell phone use, changing a CD or radio station, eating and drinking, and grooming while driving is also dangerous. Mix these distractions with an inexperienced driver and that is a deadly combination!

If under 18, you must follow the passenger restrictions under the Graduated Driver's License Law. Both the Permit and Intermediate License phase have a limit of one unrelated person under 20 years of age in the vehicle at all times.

Underage Drinking

Once a person takes a drink, impairment begins. Alcohol slows reflexes, weakens coordination, blurs eyesight, gives a false sense of being in control and leads to risky decision-making.

All states have ZERO TOLERANCE laws, meaning it is illegal for people under the age of 21 to drive after drinking any amount of alcohol.



Being convicted of driving under the influence (DUI) has serious consequences. It may lead to jail time, losing your license, an increase in insurance, or payment of fines and court costs. Most importantly, it could cause serious injury or death. Don't drink and drive!

No Pass/No Drive Law

All students ages 16 or 17 can be denied a driver's license or have a license revoked for academic deficiency. A student is considered academically deficient when he or she has not passed at least four courses or the equivalent of four courses in the previous semester, has accumulated nine or more unexcused absences, or has dropped out of school. This affects drivers who obtain a permit or license after August 1, 2007.

For more information:

- **AAA Exchange:** www.aaapublicaffairs.com
- **AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety:** www.aaafoundation.org
- **Drivers.com:** www.drivers.com/topic/8/
- **Driving Skills for Life:** www.drivingskillsforlife.com
- **How's My Driving.Com? Teen Driver Program:** www.howsmydriving.com/drive4life.nsf
- **Keep It Real Campaign to Reduce Underage Drinking:** www.keep-it-real.us
- **National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:** www.nhtsa.dot.gov
- **National Injury Prevention Foundation "ThinkFirst":** www.thinkfirst.org
- **National Safety Council:** www.nsc.org
- **Smart Drivers Just Drive:** www.distracteddriving.org
- **Students Against Drunk Driving:** www.sadd.org
- **STOP Underage Drinking:** www.stopalcoholabuse.gov
- **TeenDriving.Com:** www.teendriving.com
- **The USAA Educational Foundation:** www.usaaedfoundation.org
- **Underage Drinking Enforcement Training Center:** www.udetc.org